

# EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

HONORING LT. BENJAMIN BERGER

**HON. HOWARD L. BERMAN**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 6, 2009*

Mr. BERMAN. Madam Speaker, I am honored to pay tribute to my very good friend, Lieutenant Benjamin Berger, a veteran of the U.S. Navy. In honor of his courage, initiative and devotion to duty, he was awarded the following decorations: Silver Star for heroism during the Normandy invasion, and the Presidential Unit Citation. On April 16, 2008, Lt. Berger was bestowed the title of "Chevalier" of the Legion of Honor by the President of the French Republic.

Born in Chicago, Illinois in June 1920, Ben graduated from Sullivan High School and obtained his degree from Loyola University. After working part time for the U.S. Postal Service, he was inducted into the U.S. Navy as an officer in December 1942. Following basic training in Chicago, he was shipped off as a communications officer to the U.S. Amphibious Force, 3rd Division and participated in the invasions of North Africa and Sicily.

In December 1943, he was assigned to England and trained as a fire control officer in support of the U.S. Rangers. On June 6, 1944, he landed at Verville with the Army Ranger 2nd and 5th Battalions in one of D-Day's most dangerous assignments. Lt. Berger organized critical naval gunfire control support not only for his unit, but also for another unit whose leadership had been disrupted during the landing chaos. His actions contributed to a successful assault on the important enemy gun emplacements above the cliffs at Point du Hoc and later the towns of Isigny and Grandcamp. Benjamin was separated from the U.S. Navy at Norfolk, Virginia in October 1945.

Ben married his first wife, Florine Perlman, in December 1941 and they had two children, Elise and Stephan. He retired from his position as Operations District Manager in Southern California for Thrifty Drug Stores in 1981. He married his current wife Rae Polland, who is a lovely vivacious lady, served as senior intern in my district office. They were married in June 2002, and now reside in Valley Village, California near their extended family.

Madam Speaker and distinguished colleagues, I ask you to join me in saluting Lieutenant Benjamin Berger for his impressive military career and dedicated service to the United States of America.

THE ECONOMIC RECOVERY THROUGH RESPONSIBLE HOMEOWNERSHIP ACT AND THE COMMONSENSE AUTO RECOVERY (CAR) ACT

**HON. DAVID DREIER**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 6, 2009*

Mr. DREIER. Madam Speaker, today I have introduced a trio of bills that focus on my top legislative priority for the coming year: getting our economy growing again. The centerpiece of this plan is the Fair and Simple Tax (FAST) Act. I introduced this legislation in the previous Congress, and it remains my long-term goal for economic revitalization. The FAST Act would dramatically simplify and reduce the tax burden on Americans. By creating a simple, one-page tax form that retains the child credit and all major deductions, like mortgage interest, it would make the annual tax filing nightmare far more manageable. It would also implement a host of additional tax reforms, such as reducing the tax on capital gains and corporate income, permanently extending the R&D credit, and creating new incentives for long-term financial planning.

Implementing the FAST Act, however, is a long-term goal. As we work toward comprehensive reform, we must also pursue more immediate and targeted solutions to jumpstart our economy. That's why I introduced two additional pro-growth bills—aimed at the housing industry and the auto industry.

The Economic Recovery Through Responsible Homeownership Act would create new tax incentives for responsible home purchases. Those who make a down payment of 5, 10 or 15 percent will get a tax credit of \$2000, \$5000 or \$10,000 respectively. The housing crisis is at the root of our economic crisis. We need to encourage new purchases to stabilize the market, stop the free-fall in prices and restore the communities that have been plagued by foreclosures. But because irresponsible homeownership and predatory lending are partly to blame for the crisis in the first place, only a plan that rewards responsible action will succeed. This bill accomplishes both objectives.

I have also introduced the Commonsense Auto Recovery (CAR) Act to provide a boost to our ailing auto industry, without resorting to another bailout. The CAR Act draws on the same principle as my housing bill and creates a tax credit for car purchases, equal to the amount of the sales tax on the purchase. Any individual or small business owner is eligible for the credit. This is an important component of my pro-growth plan because the auto industry touches so many parts of our economy and workforce. The manufacturers, dealers, auto-parts makers and financiers—many of whom are small businesses—are all a part of the broad-based auto industry that has weakened considerably in this economy. Thousands of jobs have already been lost, and thousands

more are threatened. An effective and sustainable way to boost the industry is to encourage Americans to get back to their local car dealerships.

Addressing the immediate challenges of the weak housing and auto industries will provide a quick boost to our economy. These are critical short-term steps that must be taken. In the long run, we must act on the need for fundamental reform of our tax code to reduce the burden on families and businesses and simplify the tax-filing process. We cannot restore our economy without both a short-term and long-term view. I believe that this package of tax bills is a comprehensive approach to getting our economy back on a path of growth and I look forward to working with my colleagues in a bipartisan way to achieve this goal.

THE GREEN SCHOOLS ACT OF 2009

**HON. MARK STEVEN KIRK**

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 6, 2009*

Mr. KIRK. Madam Speaker, I am proud to stand here today to introduce legislation with Congressman CHRISTOPHER CARNEY (D-PA) which will provide healthier and more productive environments for students.

As energy prices soar and state budgets shrink, schools around the country need more assistance than ever to keep afloat. Congress can provide a commonsense way to help schools achieve fiscal sustainability by helping them to reach energy sustainability through energy efficient and other green improvements.

According to the independent U.S. Green Buildings Council which established a nationally recognized green school certification program, the LEED rating system, green schools on average save \$100,000 per year. This is enough to hire two new teachers, buy 500 new computers or purchase 5,000 new textbooks. In fact, if all new school construction or school renovations went green, energy savings alone would total \$20 billion over the next 10 years.

Green schools also provide better environments for our children, improving student achievement and health. Students at LEED certified schools perform 20 percent better on reading tests and 24 percent better on math tests than the average student. There are nearly 40 percent fewer asthma occurrences at green schools, contributing to the decreased number of sick days students experience.

Providing green school improvements are extremely cost effective. Construction costs on average less than \$3 per square foot more to build, yet saves roughly \$12 per square foot in energy and water savings.

Some schools are already investing in green school technology to take advantage of all the benefits it provides. I am proud that a school

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